

1 CLAIMS

- 2 <sup>17</sup>  
~~1.~~ A spring having force levels varying by less than 30% over more than 40% of  
3 maximum deflection capacity during loading, comprising a pseudoelastic element  
4 that has a memory shape with at least one segment where at least one of flexural  
5 and torsional deformations concentrate.
- 6 <sup>18</sup>  
~~2.~~ The spring according to claim <sup>17</sup>~~1~~, wherein regions of said pseudoelastic element  
7 outside segments where concentrated deformations occur are stiffened.
- 8 <sup>19</sup>  
~~3.~~ The spring according to claim <sup>17</sup>~~1~~, wherein said pseudoelastic material is formed of  
9 elements selected from the group consisting essentially of Ni, Ag, Au, Cd, In, Ga,  
10 Si, Ge, Sn, Sb, Zn, Nb, Cu, Co, Fe, Mn, Pt, Al, Ti, Cr, Be, C and Tl, and  
11 combinations thereof.
- 12 <sup>20</sup>  
~~4.~~ The spring according to claim <sup>17</sup>~~1~~, wherein said pseudoelastic element has been  
13 formed and then heat treated when restrained in order to assume said memory  
14 shape.
- 15 <sup>21</sup>  
~~5.~~ The spring according to claim <sup>17</sup>~~1~~, wherein said pseudoelastic element has been  
16 heat treated in free condition after establishment of said memory shape.
- 17 <sup>22</sup>  
~~6.~~ The spring according to claim <sup>17</sup>~~1~~, wherein said force levels are applied and  
18 removed at least once for improving stability under subsequent repeated load  
19 application.
- 20 <sup>23</sup>  
~~7.~~ The spring according claim <sup>17</sup>~~1~~, wherein said pseudoelastic element has at least one  
21 of rectangular, circular and elliptical cross sections.